

# Race to the White House

12<sup>th</sup> Grade American Government

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## Introduction:

Welcome to the Presidential Election. It's the big show, and this year's election is going to be hard fought. The election is predicted as being a tight race and you have assembled a top notch team to handle this task. Your team of three will fill the following roles:

1. **Presidential Candidate:** You are the next President of the United States, well at least that is what your campaign manager keeps saying.
2. **Campaign Manager:** As the "mastermind" of the operation, you are responsible for making your candidate a winner. Good luck.
3. **Media Liaison/Secretary:** You must make sure that the candidate always puts his/her best face forward. Image is the name of the game. Sell the candidate, win the presidency.

## Task:

Your task is to compose a winning strategy for the upcoming election, by learning about issues, politics, media, and voters. The more you know the better your chances for winning the race. It's only the most powerful position on the planet, no worries.

## Process:

You will need to research or canvas several phases of the presidential race in order to put together the best strategy possible. **Each member of the team should produce a minimum of one page of responses for each phase.** The phases are as follow.

### 1. Phase One: Announce Candidacy

- a. Build a Platform **Presidential Candidate**
  - i. **What is your party?**
  - ii. Take the political quiz at <http://www.quiz2d.com/quiz/>. Decide from your findings where you are on the political spectrum. **After describing the results, do you predict any difficulties promoting your political stance? If so which?**
  - iii. **Choose five issues and describe how you feel about them and how the government should be involved or limited.**  
<http://www.cnn.com/election/2012/campaign-issues.html>
- b. Talk to Party Members: **Campaign Manager**
  - i. Who are the influential members of your party? You need their backing.
    1. **Find them in both houses and in the influential states and write a short invitation to support your candidate and why.**
    2. Senate Seniority list:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seniority\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States\\_Senate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Seniority_in_the_United_States_Senate)
    3. House Seniority list:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_current\\_members\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_States\\_House\\_of\\_Representatives\\_by\\_seniority](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_current_members_of_the_United_States_House_of_Representatives_by_seniority)
    4. List of Current Governors:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_current\\_United\\_States\\_governors](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_current_United_States_governors)
- c. How to Sell the Candidate: **Media Liaison/Secretary**
  - i. Effective Commercials: View and analyze what's effective in 4 of the following commercials. **Briefly describe the theme and why you believe they worked.**
    1. <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/type/real-people>
      - a. (Choose Rhonda Nix)
    2. <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/type/fear>
      - a. (Choose Bomb)
    3. <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/type/children>
      - a. (Choose Surgeon)
    4. <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/commercials/type/commander-in-chief>
      - a. (Choose Oval Office)

## 2. Phase Two: Primary Season

- a. Give speeches: **Presidential Candidate**
  - i. Find your inspiration: Visit these sites and print out one of the famous speeches.
    1. <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/PDFFiles/Barack%20Obama%20-%202004%20DNC%20Address.pdf>
    2. <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/PDFFiles/FDR%20Pearl%20Harbor.pdf>
    3. <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/PDFFiles/Lyndon%20Baines%20Johnson%20-%20We%20shall%20overcome.pdf>
    4. <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/PDFFiles/Ronald%20Reagan%20-%20Brandenburg%20Gate%20Address.pdf>
  - ii. **“Mark up” the speech with notes and report on 3 effective strategies used by the speech writer.** These are themes that you would like to see in your speeches during this season.
- b. Plan events/Headquarters/travel/signs: **Campaign Manager**
  - i. Funding: Who can we ask for money and support? Read the article on a recent case that may help your cause. **Summarize what you read.**  
<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=122805666>
  - ii. Where do we need to set up campaign HQs?
    1. Look over the '08 Primary Timeline and choose one state from early, middle, and late primary season. (Note the links for your chosen party)  
<http://politics.nytimes.com/election-guide/2008/primaries/republicanprimaries/index.html>
  - iii. How much money do we need to win?
    1. Check out the fundraising numbers from the 2008 election to get an idea of what kind of amounts will be needed.  
[http://www.cfinst.org/president/pdf/2010\\_0106\\_Table1.pdf](http://www.cfinst.org/president/pdf/2010_0106_Table1.pdf)  
**Predict a total fundraising dollar amount and, by using the chart, name three areas of supporters that could give in the three categories listed.**
- c. Set up an effective website **Media Liaison/Secretary**
  - i. Look at all of the following potential 2012 candidates' current websites. **On a two columned-chart record features you find and why they are there.**
    1. <https://web.archive.org/web/20080109040525/http://www.mikehuckabee.com/>
    2. <https://web.archive.org/web/20120201223713/http://www.newt.org/>
    3. <http://www.barackobama.com/>
    4. <http://www.randpaul2016.com/>
  - ii. **Summarize the key features you would incorporate into your candidate's website.** Include color choice, options, images, themes, social networking links, and other special features.

### 3. Phase Three: General Election Season

- a. Grand Finale Speech **Presidential Candidate**
  - i. **Write a 2-3 page speech to the nation that addresses the following concerns:**
    1. Status: Current condition of America.
    2. Promise: How are you going to propose change?
    3. Vision: Touches upon your biggest issue stances
    4. Connect to the people. Reference a few citizens and their problems.
    5. Politely slam your opponent
    6. Incorporate Basic Principles of Govt, Founding Documents/Quotes
    7. Conclude
- b. Where to campaign? **Campaign Manager**
  - i. Using the website <http://www.270towin.com/> strategize your target voters by state. *Select Election Year 2012* in menu to look closely at the map.
    1. **List the states that you will most likely win. (Solid Dem or Solid Rep)**
    2. **List the states that will be competitive/close, and you would to pursue heavily. Describe your strategy for winning these close contests.**
    3. **Provide the final electoral vote count.**
- c. National Convention and Beyond **Media Liaison/Secretary**
  - i. Your party convention will either be in Charlotte (Dem) or Tampa bay (Rep) this year.  
Your four days in August will have to be mapped out per day.
  - ii. **Schedule each of these days with a “catchy theme”, keynote speaker, special guest, and patriotic connection. Also choose a willing Hollywood producer to organize the production.**
  - iii. General Election: Plan to promote your candidate in the best light possible.  
What image will be important to your now national audience? **Describe how you will keep the candidate relatable, yet a leader, socially caring, yet tough. Describe how Americans will view the candidate.**  
Examples of 08 commercials  
McCain: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J\\_A53PAxeR8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J_A53PAxeR8)  
McCain: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHXYsw\\_ZDXg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oHXYsw_ZDXg)  
Obama: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1yq0tMYPDJQ&feature=related>  
Obama: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5VaA6sMabk>

### 4. Phase Four: Presentation

- a. **Presidential Candidate:** Give a short (2-3minutes) stump speech to students.
- b. **Campaign Manager:** Choose the issues the presidential candidate will talk about.  
Provide a brief rationale for each issue present and for the direction of the speech.
- c. **Media Liaison/Secretary:** Write the speech. Collaborate with your team, make sure you're hitting all the right points. Use the direction and themes chosen and consider the audience. It has to be incredible!
- d. **As a team:** Consider what signage/tools could enhance your candidacy.

## Evaluation: Phases 1-3

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Amount of Information	All topics are addressed and all questions answered completely. Additional information accompanies the response.	All topics are addressed and all questions answered completely.	All topics are addressed, and most questions answered.	One or more topics were not addressed.
Quality of Information	Information clearly relates to the main topic. It includes several supporting details and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the main topic. It provides 1-2 supporting details and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the main topic. No details and/or examples are given.	Information has little or nothing to do with the main topic.
Connections	The responses reflect a clear connection between the prompt and governmental/political topics or themes.	The responses reflect some connection between the prompt and governmental/political topics or themes.	The responses reflect little connection between the prompt and governmental/political topics or themes.	The responses reflect no connection between the prompt and governmental/political topics or themes.
Mechanics	No grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors.	Almost no grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors	A few grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.	Many grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.

## Evaluation: Speech

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Clarity	Speaks clearly and distinctly all (100-95%) the time, and mispronounces no words.	Speaks clearly and distinctly all (100-95%) the time, but mispronounces one word.	Speaks clearly and distinctly most (94-85%) of the time. Mispronounces no more than one	Often mumbles or can not be understood OR mispronounces more than one
Time	Presentation is 5-6 minutes long.	Presentation is 4 minutes long.	Presentation is 3 minutes long.	Presentation is less than 3 minutes OR more than 6 minutes.
Content	Shows a full understanding of the topic.	Shows a good understanding of the topic.	Shows a good understanding of parts of the topic.	Does not seem to understand the topic very well.
Additional/Creative	Student uses several props (could include costume) that show considerable	Student uses 1 prop that shows considerable work/creativity and which make the	Student uses 1 prop which makes the presentation better.	The student uses no props OR the props chosen detract from the presentation.

## Conclusion:

You have put much time and commitment into promoting your candidate, the message, and the face. Elections are completely exhausting and expensive. Are you ready to begin considering the re-election bid yet? Consider the tasks accomplished by your team of three and imagine the hundreds or thousands of volunteers and staff necessary to compete for the office of President. Congratulations on a job well done. Enjoy the inaugural party and sweet taste of victory.

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